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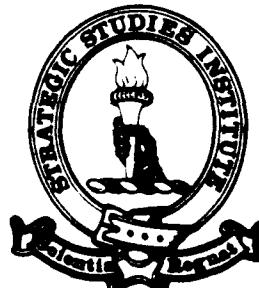
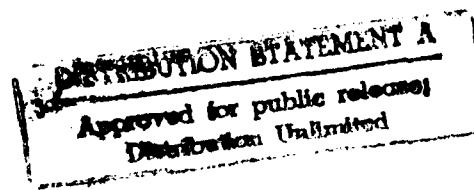
Strategic Studies Institute  
U.S. Army War College

NATO'S SUBSTRATEGIC NUCLEAR  
FORCES AND STRATEGY:  
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



Thomas-Durell Young

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**Thomas-Durell Young**

**January 13, 1992**

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## FOREWORD

One of the key implications of the fundamental changes currently underway in European security affairs has been the diminished importance of short-range nuclear forces (SNF) to NATO security requirements. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, and the scheduled withdrawal of the Soviet Western Group of Forces from eastern Germany by the end of 1994, combine to make the continued role of nuclear weapons in NATO strategy ambiguous. President Bush's September 27, 1991 initiative to remove unilaterally all U.S. ground-launched SNF will leave the alliance with an on-call substrategic nuclear force limited to gravity bombs carried by dual-capable aircraft.

The earlier need to assess the implications of the changes in the European security environment and the envisaged role to be played by nuclear forces resulted in a study by this institute, *NATO Substrategic Nuclear Forces: The Case for Modernization and a New Strategy Based upon Reconstitution* (August 7, 1991). President Bush's September initiative obviously altered the basis for debate on this subject. It was therefore decided that a fresh look at substrategic nuclear forces in NATO was required. The author argues that the possibility of nuclear proliferation resulting from the disintegration of the Soviet Union and possible future risks from the south make it an opportune time for the alliance to contemplate future nuclear strategy and force options.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this essay as a contribution to understanding this complex and evolving aspect of European security affairs.



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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR**

THOMAS-DURELL YOUNG was a National Security Affairs Analyst at the Strategic Studies Institute from 1988 to 1991, and since then has been an Associate Research Professor. Prior to this appointment, he was a country risk analyst for BERI, S.A., a Swiss-based consulting firm. Dr. Young received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Institute of International Studies, University of Geneva, Switzerland; his M.A. from the School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University; and is a 1990 graduate of the U.S. Army War College. He has published extensively on U.S. alliance issues with particular emphasis on Western Europe and the Southwest Pacific.

## **NATO'S SUBSTRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES AND STRATEGY: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

President George Bush's September 27, 1991 speech<sup>1</sup> reducing unilaterally the U.S. short range (SNF) and tactical nuclear weapons arsenal has brought fully to bear on U.S. and alliance strategy the magnitude of the changes which have taken place in the European security environment. The Bush announcement, which was dutifully endorsed at the subsequent 50th NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) meeting in October, envisages substantial reductions in alliance nuclear forces to be achieved by the mid-decade, with no modernization of residual substrategic nuclear systems planned, albeit the option to do so remains open.<sup>2</sup> (Substrategic nuclear forces employ nonstrategic systems with ranges under 5,500 km, excluding ground-based short-range nuclear forces.) In terms of alliance internal politics, the Bush initiative has solved what has become, over the past 10 years, a perennially divisive issue in the alliance; i.e., the existence and envisaged use of SNF, simply by divesting the alliance of them unilaterally.

Unfortunately for the United States and NATO, while admittedly Bush's *coup de theatre* was politically well-timed (it came at a time when German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who had been surprisingly quiet on SNF over the past year, was obviously beginning a new public campaign to press for the withdrawal of SNF from Europe<sup>3</sup>), it has not solved the fundamental underlying problem facing the alliance regarding the future role to be played by nuclear forces in a transformed, threat-ambiguous, but risk-abundant, Europe. In a general sense, the problem associated with the future role to be played by nuclear weapons in NATO strategy is two-fold.

First, the absolute number of nuclear forces available for NATO planning will diminish as SNF are withdrawn from service. The announcement by President Bush both to

dismantle or withdraw all U.S. ground-launched SNF and sea-launched tactical nuclear weapons, and to cancel the development program for a new substrategic air-launched cruise missile (the SRAM-T) can be interpreted as a continuation of past NATO policy dating back to the Montebello decision of 1983,<sup>4</sup> where the alliance's zeal to reduce SNF has not, however, been matched by a political commitment to modernized residual longer-range capabilities. The net result of this characteristic of NATO policy will be to limit the alliance's substrategic nuclear force, after mid-decade, to gravity nuclear bombs to be delivered by dual-capable aircraft (DCA). Thus, by default, NATO's on-call substrategic nuclear forces have been defined *a priori* a full review of future security and diplomatic requirements.

Second, this sea change in NATO nuclear strategy is taking place at a time when the ongoing break-up of the Soviet Union could result in nuclear proliferation, particularly of SNFs, of unimaginable proportions, both in Eastern Europe and to the south. When considered in conjunction with the proliferation of long-range weapons of mass destruction (e.g., intermediate-range ballistic missiles [IRBMs], armed with chemical and possibly biological warheads) already held to the south of Europe by anti-Western regimes, fundamentalist Muslims and pan-Arab nationalists, and the desire by some of these states to acquire nuclear weapons, it would appear to be an opportune time for the alliance to contemplate reassessing its future substrategic nuclear requirements. SNF, on the other hand, have served their purpose and can now be dismantled with every confidence that their future utility to Western European security is negligible. Nonetheless, the uncertain security outlook in the disintegrating Soviet Union, and in certain North African and Middle Eastern states, necessitates an alliance substrategic capability to ensure a sufficient level of deterrence against future potential aggressors.

The purpose of this essay is to argue that unless the alliance is willing to face the politically delicate fact that nuclear forces will not automatically become irrelevant due to the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, then

it could leave NATO exposed to intimidation and blackmail. NATO, therefore, continues to have a need for "political weapons" to provide it with as wide a range of options as possible to support it in its new strategy which stresses "crisis management." The "Alliance's New Strategic Concept" issued at the end of the November 7 Rome summit states that, "The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated...are...even more remote [than in the past]."<sup>5</sup> However, the *potential* for nuclear proliferation of former-Soviet SNF warheads and other weapons of mass-destruction in the east and to the south has clearly increased. Thus, their possible use for intimidation of Western and Central Europe should warrant a serious reevaluation of NATO nuclear strategy and force requirements with an aim to addressing such difficult questions as modernization, exercises, and wargames. For if the alliance continues in the future to adhere to its previous practice of reducing numbers and capabilities, eschewing modernization (out of fear of the negative message such acts would send) and avoiding alliance-sponsored wargames involving nuclear scenarios, then it could well make itself ill-prepared to meet the future security challenges of its European members in their new security environment.

### **The Bush Initiative.**

The Bush September 27 initiative truly constitutes the most sweeping unilateral act of disarmament in the nuclear era, and one which will have a profound effect upon the U.S. military services.<sup>6</sup> For the U.S. Navy, its nuclear-armed Tomahawk cruise missiles (SLCMs), B57 and B61 gravity bombs and depth bombs are to be removed from ships (the older bombs are to be dismantled) and placed in storage. Its land-based tactical nuclear weapons, associated with land-based naval air, will be destroyed. The U.S. Army is to become totally denuclearized through the withdrawal from service of its 850 Lance warheads and some 1300 (two types of eight-inch and one 155 millimeter shells) artillery-fired atomic projectiles (AFAPs). While Bush canceled the Follow-on-to-Lance program (known as FOTL) and the modernization of AFAPs in

Europe in May 1990<sup>7</sup> (which would have removed all Army nuclear forces from Europe by approximately mid-decade), the September initiative canceled Army plans to maintain a residual nuclear capability in the form of modernized AFAPs. The U.S. Air Force lost its proposed SRAM-T missile program, which would have given its DCA a modern air-launched short-range missile (tactical nuclear) known as a TASM. Consequently, once the Bush initiative is fully implemented, NATO's on call substrategic nuclear capabilities will be limited solely to U.S. and British gravity bombs, dropped from U.S. and allied DCA.

The nuclear capabilities of U.S. NATO allies have not been unaffected by Bush's initiative. British Prime Minister John Major hailed the initiative in a most favorable manner.<sup>8</sup> Britain will withdraw from service and destroy its own Lance battlefield tactical missiles and AFAPs. The Royal Navy will remove from its ships and place in central store its nuclear depth bombs. The Tory government has, however, stated its intention to acquire, at some point, a TASM to replace its aging stocks of W-177 gravity bombs.<sup>9</sup> France, due to growing financial constraints, began in July to announce reductions in its nuclear programs. In regards to SNF, Paris made the painful decision in early September that its controversial new surface-to-surface missile, the *Hadès* (already reduced from an initially projected 120 to 40 units),<sup>10</sup> would not be deployed, but would be placed in storage.<sup>11</sup> Allied countries which participate in nuclear roles and peacetime basing, such as the Netherlands and Turkey, are also to withdraw from service certain capabilities in keeping with Bush's initiative.<sup>12</sup>

These national initiatives were formally accepted by the alliance at its October 17-18, 1991 NPG meeting held in Taormina, Italy: SNF are to be phased out and NATO is to reduce its over-all substrategic nuclear forces by 80 percent.<sup>13</sup> A classified number of nuclear bombs are to remain stationed throughout Europe.<sup>14</sup> In effect, what this series of rapid disarmament initiatives has produced is an alliance nuclear strategy based upon minimum deterrence, directed increasingly against ambiguous risks, *vis-à-vis* a specific conventional or nuclear threat. Or, as observed by Georg

Possaner in the Viennese *Der Standard*, U.S. and NATO strategy is no longer based upon deterrence, but rather upon confidence.<sup>15</sup> But does the security outlook in Europe warrant such a sanguine view?

### **Novus Ordo Seclorum?**

Despite the welcome ending of the cold war, compelling reasons remain for maintaining the alliance's ability to deploy a certain number of modernized U.S. substrategic nuclear forces (vice SNF) throughout its region of interest to protect Western and Central Europe particularly from acts of nuclear intimidation. First, U.S. substrategic nuclear forces will remain essential to European security until which time Western Europe develops its own integrated level of deterrence, and possibly beyond as a further element of assurance.

Second, despite the substantial reduction in the capability of the Soviet military to launch a short warning time offensive in Europe, against which allied SNF were targeted, it could be a number of years before stability returns to the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States. As a result, the question of the disposition of SNFs, let alone strategic forces, distributed among a number of former Soviet republics, needs to be addressed in alliance strategy.

Third, Soviet SNFs, because of their large numbers and distribution throughout most of the Soviet Union,<sup>16</sup> would appear to be most vulnerable to falling under the control of independent republics (notwithstanding recent assurances from no less an authority than Marshal of Artillery V. Mikhalkin, Chief of the Ground Forces Missile and Artillery Troops).<sup>17</sup> Most disconcerting has been the oscillation in policies expressed by some republics from wishing to become nuclear-free, to that of wanting to obtain control of nuclear forces, e.g., the Ukraine.<sup>18</sup> Even if the successors of the defunct Soviet central government do indeed have the most honorable of intentions and wish to collect and then destroy their stock of SNF,<sup>19</sup> press reports have estimated that such an effort could take 10 years and cost the equivalent of \$2 billion.<sup>20</sup> Whether a Russian government in Moscow can both

maintain control over all of these warheads in the interim and then find the financial resources to destroy (hopefully) all of them would appear to present a challenge of such magnitude as to constitute more than a passing interest by NATO. It is little wonder that Washington, particularly the U.S. Congress, has become increasingly concerned with the possibility of nuclear proliferation, both in terms of actual warheads and expertise. This anxiety resulted in a November 1991 plan passed by the Senate to fund (to the tune of \$400 million) the destruction of Soviet nuclear warheads.<sup>21</sup>

Forth, the favorable alteration in European regional security conditions, which has had such a profound impact upon NATO strategy and forces in the Central Region, has not been mirrored by improved security conditions to the south. Population growth that far outstrips economic expansion has sent a surge of Arabs to Europe in search of jobs also sought by equally desperate, but generally more welcome (*vide* Christian), East Europeans. At the same time, West European investment and aid is being directed eastward, leaving North Africa and other parts of the Middle East an increasingly destitute playground for radical anti-Western regimes, fundamentalist Muslims, and pan-Arab nationalists with increasing access to long-range weapons of mass destruction. The possibility of a direct threat to Turkish territory during the 1991 Gulf War illustrates such potential dangers. According to one press report, NATO has already begun planning to deal with threats to Turkey from the south.<sup>22</sup>

Not to be discounted is the attempt by some Middle Eastern states to acquire IRBMs<sup>23</sup> and nuclear weapons. The discovery by inspection teams from the International Atomic Energy Agency of an apparently hitherto unknown extensive nuclear weapons R&D program in Iraq is an excellent case in point.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, recent press reports state that certain Middle Eastern countries with nuclear ambitions have attempted to capitalize on the chaotic situation in the Soviet Union to recruit Soviet nuclear weapon scientists.<sup>25</sup> General Dmitri Volkogonov (Ret.), a defense advisor to President Boris Yeltsin, acknowledged in November 1991 that desperate conditions in the Soviet Union could result in the emigration of

Soviet experts, thereby constituting "a potential international disaster."<sup>26</sup> As long as the Soviet Union continues to experience widespread chaos, the possibility of proliferation of nuclear technology and weaponry remains too important an eventuality for the political leadership of the alliance to ignore.

Thus, the combination of uncertainties, both from east and south, argues for the maintenance of a credible NATO nuclear strategy to enable the alliance to meet new security challenges with as wide a range of options as possible, including substrategic nuclear forces, stationed *in Europe*, and capable of deployment to crises as a deterrent. The argument that sophisticated conventional munitions can provide the alliance with a non-nuclear strike capability misses the point. NATO's new strategy stressing crisis management will clearly need a substrategic nuclear capability to provide it with an alliance political weapon which can act as a deterrent to these emerging risks. The issue now, as it has been in the past in the alliance, is one of deterrence, not warfighting.

The alliance will also require a continuation of its previous nuclear strategy, albeit with some alterations, to enable it to confront challenges to its security interests and objectives in as proactive manner as possible. Not insignificantly, the previous concept of nuclear deterrence employed in NATO strategy may require rethinking. For, as argued by Olivier Debouzy, it is problematic whether the "culture of deterrence" (with its stabilizing influences), which has evolved between the superpowers over the past 40 years, will be shared by proliferating states.<sup>27</sup> One can reasonably question how interested some of the independent former Soviet republics are in "stability" considering the numerous ethnic and irredentist forces at work in these states, let alone in radical Islamic regimes in the Middle East and North Africa who see Occidental power and culture as inimical to their basic interests and objectives. In essence, it is too early to abdicate NATO's deterrence policy for one based upon confidence.

### **Desiderata.**

Haunting any effort on the part of the alliance to deal with substrategic forces and strategy will surely be the past alliance experience concerning SNF. While arguably the two issues are hardly similar in reality, it can be expected that past difficulties related to SNF will influence future NATO substrategic nuclear planning. To be sure, the previous requirements for SNF no longer exist, thereby negating any need to maintain such a capability in NATO. Notwithstanding the fact that the Republic of Russia will likely retain the largest conventional military capability of any European nation, it will neither have the forces, nor the geographical disposition (following the final withdrawal of the Soviet Western Group of Forces from eastern Germany at the end of 1994),<sup>28</sup> to be able to launch a massive short-warning attack into Central and Western Europe, which allied SNF were envisaged to deter. Even before the abortive *coup d'état* attempt in Moscow that precipitated the astonishingly rapid disintegration of Communist Party power, no less an authority than the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General John Galvin, stated publicly that he no longer believed the Soviets were planning for such an offensive.<sup>29</sup>

What is needed to counter future "risks" at the nuclear level is to continue existing strategy and implementing procedures, supported by a convincing alliance substrategic capability.<sup>30</sup> Within the current structure of alliance strategy, the following considerations will need to be addressed.

First, substrategic nuclear capabilities aside, the type of risks and outright threats the alliance could well face in the future will necessitate the firmness of past NATO nuclear solidarity, to leave no state in doubt as to its intentions, with a new degree of operational dexterity necessitated by these amorphous scenarios. Consequently, NATO's policy of not eschewing first use, remains valid as recently restated by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney.<sup>31</sup> To be sure, in an alliance such as NATO, nuclear forces will always be envisaged as "weapons of last resort." Nonetheless, there is no sound rationale for NATO to limit itself in its choice of responses to

threats to its collective security. As in the past, substrategic nuclear forces will remain political weapons whose purpose is to deter acts of aggression against alliance members. Perhaps most importantly, the uncertainty resulting from this aspect of strategy should act as a moderating influence over states devoid of possessing the "culture of deterrence."

Second, in order to provide capability to this strategy is the need for a demonstrable substrategic deterrence capability. A modern DCA, armed with European-stationed gravity bombs, while perhaps not ideal,<sup>32</sup> should continue to provide the alliance with a sufficient level of deterrence in view of the air defense capabilities of the states likely to challenge the alliance in the disintegrated Soviet Union and the Third World. There is, however, one possible unforeseen consequence of complete reliance upon gravity bombs which could have negative consequences for NATO nuclear planning. As it now stands, some European nations participate in the aerial delivery of U.S. substrategic nuclear weapons. Since *only* the U.S. Air Force possesses aircraft with stealth capability, it could devolve through default for planning purposes that the United States would take on a greater role in the delivery of these weapons, particularly if a threatening nation develops a sophisticated air defense network.<sup>33</sup> This in itself would call into question the continued viability of nuclear burden-sharing within the alliance. Admittedly, this is not an issue of immediate import; however, it is an aspect of reliance upon solely gravity bombs which needs to be monitored over time.

Third, essential to supporting both of the above elements of NATO nuclear posture objectives is the need for the recommencement of what has been very divisive in NATO military structures in the past; nuclear wargaming.<sup>34</sup> The holding of wargames and high-level seminars is essential to develop and validate alliance nuclear procedures and guidelines against the new wide range of potential types of nuclear-related scenarios. Fortunately, the alliance appears to be moving in this direction, and, at the behest in part of General Galvin, new high-level seminars to discuss crises that may involve nuclear weapons are scheduled to take place in 1992.<sup>35</sup>

### **Impedimenta.**

It could be expected that as the conventional Soviet military threat continues its precipitous decline, the continuation of NATO's nuclear strategy will surely tax the parameters of political consensus within the alliance regarding nuclear forces. Modernization of substrategic nuclear forces would especially be a difficult domestic political issue in most European NATO states since, it would be argued, such acts would send the wrong signal to governments with whom NATO states have been trying either to cultivate or improve relations. While not ignoring the presence of strongly anti-nuclear sentiments in the Nordic and Low-Countries, the ruling conservative-liberal coalition<sup>36</sup> in Bonn would find such initiatives difficult *in extremis* because of its past experience in dealing with SNF and the difficulty it would surely face in trying to disassociate these two different issues in the domestic political debate.<sup>37</sup>

For obvious domestic political reasons ("the shorter the range, the deader the Germans"), the ruling coalition in Bonn, led largely on this issue by Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, has seen nuclear weapons as an issue upon which the coalition can only lose political support to the opposition *Socialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD) and *Die Gruene* (Greens). This issue gained in immediacy when the two Germanies began moving toward unification in early 1990, and it became apparent that hard questions would have to be answered about the future targeting of SNF against formations in the territory of a unified Germany, or in the reforming Warsaw Pact states.<sup>38</sup> Finally, Bonn is currently actively engaged in facilitating the peaceful withdrawal of approximately 280,000 Soviet forces (and their dependents) from eastern Germany, and therefore is extremely reluctant to send any provocative signals, which could be interpreted as threatening, to Moscow.

Not surprisingly, the Bush initiative and subsequent NPG determination in Taormina have been widely supported in Bonn. Alliance SNF reductions will strongly affect the Federal Republic because of the previous need to station a

disproportionally large number of SNF in that country.<sup>39</sup> From the perspective of the ruling coalition, the elimination of SNF demonstrates the alliance's recognition of the altered security environment and underscores its continued relevance to German security requirements. Unfortunately, another effect of this move has been to encourage some in Bonn to press for the total withdrawal of all nuclear forces from the Federal Republic. Even the normally moderate and knowledgeable SPD Parliamentary group foreign policy spokesman, Karsten Voigt, has publicly pressed for the elimination of DCA in the Federal Republic following President Bush's speech.<sup>40</sup>

In effect, it can be expected that the largest European member of NATO, in addition to possibly other alliance members, would find it politically impossible to support the modernization of alliance substrategic nuclear capabilities, and could increasingly question the need for such weapons stationed on their soil. In essence, the alliance must deal with particularly a Federal Republic that wants to retain the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, but increasingly from afar. Therefore, the alliance needs to confront two separate but interrelated issues if it is to retain a substrategic nuclear capability in the years to come: stationing and modernization of forces.

### **Minima de Malis.**

One could assume that many in Europe, and the Federal Republic in particular, might moderate their opposition to the removal of substrategic nuclear forces in Europe should nuclear proliferation among the newly independent Soviet republics become a reality or if a radical Middle Eastern state openly proclaims possessing this capability. However, it would be irresponsible to assume this eventuality; and in any case, the continued integrity of the alliance in nuclear matters must depend upon the willingness of alliance members to participate in nuclear planning, to include, where necessary, hosting these weapons. This is obviously not an attractive proposition and other proposals have been put forward.

One such solution to this conundrum is to adapt the argument made by Karl Kaiser in late 1990 to current circumstances. In addressing the vexing issue of nuclear forces in NATO and stationing in the Federal Republic, Kaiser argued for the withdrawal of these weapons from Germany and the formulation of a strategy based upon the concept of reconstitution,<sup>41</sup> which found some support with NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner.<sup>42</sup> Under this plan, substrategic nuclear weapons would be based outside of the Federal Republic, with provisions for their rapid redeployment in Germany in times of crisis. The basis for this argument is Kaiser's contention that domestic political considerations in Germany prevent the Bonn government from entertaining the possibility of basing U.S. nuclear forces there in the future. This message, coming from a staunch proponent of the Atlanticist school; indeed, one who as recently as 1989 publicly argued the unpopular case for Germany to retain AFAPs,<sup>43</sup> suggests that the room for political maneuver currently available in Bonn is very limited indeed.

While Kaiser's solution to the Federal Republic's aversion to continuing to station nuclear forces on its soil has its attractions to many Germans, it would directly undermine the political basis of the alliance in regard to risk-sharing. Admittedly, such an option would be possible if the United States were to assign to NATO planning a specific number of SLCMs and platforms to be maintained in theater.<sup>44</sup> This would allow the maintenance of an in-theater substrategic nuclear capability, but off-shore, which, as *Le Monde* has editorialized, is one of the few politically acceptable ways to station nuclear forces in Europe.<sup>45</sup> This is not a viable option now because President Bush's decision to remove tactical nuclear weapons (to include SLCMs) from deployment at sea. Moreover, the spread of self-singularization in regard to nuclear weapons by alliance members could well destroy the political foundation upon which the alliance has been founded. The slogan "no nukes, no troops," which one heard in the U.S. Congress until very recently, no longer carries the same currency as it once did. The fact that isolationist sentiments in the United States are growing should give pause to those in

Europe who have been arguing for a continued U.S. military presence, *sans* nuclear planning and their stationing in theater.

Of course, it may come to the point where the political costs of stationing these forces could be judged by some in power in Europe as exceeding their deterrent value. This is not an insignificant factor and is an issue the alliance has had to deal with increasingly since the latter-1970s. If members of the alliance reach this point in their respective domestic political debates, then it is indeed appropriate that a full and comprehensive review of the alliance take place to leave no one in any doubt as to the magnitude of the choice facing them and the implications their decision could have for NATO.

As regards substrategic nuclear modernization, this is probably as contentious an issue as any to be faced by the alliance. Simply stated, there is little support within the alliance to deal with modernization at this moment.<sup>46</sup> This is little wonder since it is widely seen as unnecessary in view of the current security situation. And, when one considers the almost Pavlovian response on the part of many officials in Europe, particularly in Germany, to the mere mention of modernization (e.g., Minister Genscher), a new approach is needed.

Since it never appears to be an auspicious time to modernize nuclear forces in NATO, one option is that modernization should be explored outside of the alliance and on a trilateral basis between the United States, France and Britain. Fortunately, it so happens that all three countries have a similarly defined requirement for a TASM to give their respective DCA a modern stand-off capability. The U.S. option, the SRAM-T (already in trouble in Congress<sup>47</sup>), was canceled by President Bush in his September 27 initiative. However, a requirement for a TASM remains. France has been planning to develop the *Air-Sol, Longue-Portée*, air-launched tactical nuclear system to replace an existing shorter-range variant, the *Air-Sol, Moyenne Portée*. Its development has been stalled due to financial limitations in the defense budget.<sup>48</sup> Britain has no ambition to develop unilaterally such a system and has expressed an interest in either purchasing whatever the United States develops, or engaging in a codevelopment and production venture with the

French to replace its aging inventory of WE-177 gravity nuclear bombs.<sup>49</sup> British Defence Minister Tom King explicitly stated in September that a TASM was needed and planning for one was proceeding.<sup>50</sup>

What Washington, London and Paris ought to consider, therefore, is to engage in a joint R & D project to develop a TASM, *exclusive*, if necessary, of any NATO sanction.<sup>51</sup> While perhaps not an ideal solution, the pressure of growing financial constraints on defense expenditures in all three countries and the possibility of forging new and stronger defense ties among the three countries are compelling reasons in themselves. Even Paris, ever wary of being tainted with cooperating openly with NATO, might find favor with the proposal. Paris has always been in favor of bilateral cooperation with the United States, which has included (as has been acknowledged officially),<sup>52</sup> intimate cooperation in nuclear weapons R & D.

Indeed, the development of a tripartite TASM, if proposed intelligently, might find political support within the alliance. For instance, this hardware modernization could be carried out with the aim of replacing gravity bombs with fewer numbers of TASMs, thereby lowering the level of minimum deterrence still further. Regrettably, past alliance experiences of modernizing theater nuclear forces, in conjunction with reductions, have not been short-term public relations successes to say the least (e.g., the INF modernization of the early-1980s).<sup>53</sup> However, one would think that active Soviet/Russian measures to influence public opinion would be nonexistent, or greatly reduced. Finally, a TASM with some stealth characteristics would enable alliance countries, which participate in DCA nuclear delivery, to continue to do so with a state-of-the-art capability and remove the technology singularization gap which could grow between the United States and its European allies.

### **Res Ipsa Loquitur.**

That Europe is not entering a new golden era of peace, tranquility, and stability is becoming increasingly apparent. Borders which have been sacrosanct since 1945 have been

altered, thereby establishing potentially dangerous precedents. States which have gained independence from the yoke of Soviet domination are beginning to cast irredentist glances to their neighbors, many of whom also contain ethnic minorities who are kinsmen of these very states. Ominously, the first war since 1945 in Europe has taken place in Yugoslavia and continues to rage unabated. Finally, radical states in the Middle East demonstrate few signs of eschewing the goal of obtaining nuclear weapons and the means to effect long-range delivery.

The possession of limited substrategic nuclear forces by NATO will not *ipso facto* enable the alliance to confront successfully these potentially serious threats to the alliance's vital interests and objectives. An active policy of dialogue and the eventual success of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) are absolutely essential in this regard. The newly democratic states to the East, and especially the Commonwealth of Independent States, must be convinced that their security concerns will be heard in an institutionalized collective security forum. The civil war in Yugoslavia demonstrates, regrettably, that this nascent institution has many challenges to overcome before it is able to provide even a minimal level of security to its participants. And, whether such institutions will ever be able to address successfully the issue of extra-regional threats to Europe must be assessed at this preliminary stage as being problematic indeed.

What is certain is that NATO must retain the nuclear element of the alliance's newly declared strategy if it is to retain the ability to provide for its European members' ultimate security in this quickly evolving, and potentially destabilizing, security regime. There are states in North Africa and the Middle East, and forces in the emerging republics of the former Soviet Union, which evince strong inclinations not to remain nonnuclear. Whether the ruling regimes of these countries decide that their interests could be furthered by intimidating or openly threatening NATO's European allies is irrelevant. What NATO must succeed in accomplishing is to convince diplomatically these regimes and forces that the fate of its

members is inexorably linked with one another through their alliance security commitments. And, most importantly, there can be no question that the alliance possesses, in theater and on call, the ultimate means to defend itself collectively, if so challenged.

## ENDNOTES

1. See, *The Washington Post*, September 28, 1991.
2. For full details on the Bush initiative see the news briefing by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell, transcript, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, September 28, 1991.
3. Genscher began his campaign in late August. See reports of the Foreign Minister's comments in ADN (Berlin), August 27, 1991 in, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)-WEU-91-166*, August 27, 1991, p. 7; and, ADN (Berlin), September 13, 1991, in *FBIS-WEU-91-178*, September 13, 1991, p. 11.
4. See, "The Montebello Decision: Annex to the Final Communiqué of the Autumn Ministerial Meeting of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group," Brussels, NATO Information Service, October 27, 1984.
5. See, "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept," November 7, 1991, Press Communiqué S-1(91)85, Brussels: NATO Press Service, November 7, 1991, point 57.
6. See, *The New York Times*, September 29, 1991; and, Norman Polmar, "Getting Rid of the Nukes," *USNI Proceedings*, Volume 117/11/1065, November 1991, pp. 121-122.
7. See, *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1991.
8. See, *The New York Times*, September 29, 1991; and, the interview with Defence Minister Tom King in *The Times* (London), September 18, 1991.
9. A move harshly, and predictably, criticized by the editorial writers of *The Guardian* (London), September 30, 1991.
10. See, *Le Monde* (Paris), July 26, 1991.
11. See, *Le Monde* (Paris), September 29-30, 1991; and, October 30, 1991.

12. For the impact of this decision on the Netherlands see, *The International Herald Tribune* (Paris), October 1, 1991. For Turkey see, *Hurriyet* (Istanbul), October 2, 1991 in, *FBIS-WEU-91-195*, October 8, 1991, p. 25.
13. See, "NATO Nuclear Planning Group-Final Communique," Press Release M-NPG-2(91)75, Brussels, NATO Press Service, October 18, 1991.
14. See, *The New York Times*, October 12, 1991.
15. See, *Der Standard* (Vienna), September 30, 1991.
16. See *Izvestiya* (Moscow), September 23, 1991 in, *Joint Publications Research Service-TAC-91-024*, October 18, 1991, pp. 62-63.
17. SNF are reported to be located in Kazakhstan, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldavia, and Byelorussia, in addition to the Russian Republic. See, *The Washington Post*, November 22, 1991.
18. See, *The Wall Street Journal* (New York), December 6, 1991.
19. Cf., Seymour Weiss' assessment of this situation in *The Wall Street Journal*, October 3, 1991.
20. See, *The Wall Street Journal* (New York), November 20, 1991.
21. See, *The Washington Post*, November 22, 1991.
22. See, *Defense News* (Washington, DC), April 29, 1991.
23. See, Martin Navias, "Ballistic Missile Proliferation in the Third World," *Adelphi Papers* No. 252, London; The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1990.
24. See, *The New York Times*, August 6 and 7, 1991; and, *The Australian* (Canberra), November 25, 1991.
25. See, *The Washington Post*, November 28, 1991.
26. See, *The Washington Post*, November 26, 1991.
27. See, Olivier Debouzy, "The European Level of Deterrence," paper presented at the SAIC/CNSN-LANL/CNSS Conference, "A New Security Order for Europe: Implications for Western Defense," Wilton Park, Sussex, April 17-20, 1990. I am grateful to M. Debouzy for allowing me to cite this excellent essay.

28. For an assessment of the Soviet Western Group of Forces and the challenge they pose to German security planning see my piece, "Angst in Bonn: Securing Eastern Germany and the Disposition of the Soviet Western Group of Forces," *Strategic Review*, Volume 19, No. 4, Fall 1991, pp. 75-80.

29. *The Wall Street Journal*, May 13, 1991.

30. For an interesting contemporary German perspective on alliance nuclear strategy see, Holger H. Mey und Michael Ruehle, "Deutsche Sicherheitsinteressen und Nuklearstrategie der NATO," *Aussenpolitik*, Volume 42, No. 1, 1991, pp. 21-31.

31. See, *The New York Times*, October 26, 1991.

32. See Karl Kaiser, "Why Nuclear Weapons in Times of Disarmament?" *The World Today*, Volume 45, Nos. 8-9, August-September 1989, p. 138.

33. As pointed out by Ruediger Moniac in *Die Welt* (Hamburg), October 16, 1991.

34. See the following reports from *Der Spiegel* regarding the controversy surrounding Wintex and Simex exercises, No. 16, 1989, pp. 15-16; No. 17, 1989, pp. 14-16; No. 18, 1989, pp. 23-27; and, No. 23, 1990, p. 16. I am indebted to Karl-Heinz Kamp for providing me with copies of these press reports.

35. See, *Defense News* (Washington, DC), October 14, 1991.

36. Consisting of Helmut Kohl's *Christlich-Demokratische Union* (Christian Democratic Union, CDU), the *Christlich-Sozial Union* (Christian Social Union, CSU) of Bavaria, and the *Freie Demokratische Partei* (Free Democratic Party, FDP).

37. For a brief assessment of this issue in the German domestic political debate see, W.R. Smyser, *Restive Partners: Washington and Bonn Diverge*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990, pp. 69-82.

38. This comes across in the SPD Security Policy Paper issued in Spring 1990. For a summary in English, see DPA (Hamburg), April 25, 1990, in *FBIS-WEU-90-082*, April 27, 1990, p. 17.

39. See *Die Welt* (Hamburg), October 16, 1991.

40. See, ADN (Berlin), September 28, 1991 in, *FBIS-WEU-91-189*, September 30, 1991, p. 11.

41. Karl Kaiser, "From Nuclear Deterrence to Graduated Conflict Control," *Survival*, November-December 1990, pp. 483-496.

42. See the interview with Woerner in *Le Figaro* (Paris), November 19, 1990.
43. Kaiser, "Why Nuclear Weapons," pp. 134-139.
44. This had been suggested by numerous analysts. See, for instance, Hans Binnendijk, "NATO's Nuclear Modernization Dilemma," *Survival*, Volume 31, No. 2, March-April 1989, p. 142.
45. *Le Monde* (Paris), May 5, 1990.
46. Note that the "Alliance's New Strategic Concept" does mention that there is a need for "an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces based in Europe and *kept up to date where necessary*...(emphasis added). See Press Communiqué S-1(91) 85.
47. See, *Defense News* (Washington, DC), February 18, 1991.
48. For background on this French program and its place in French strategy see the excellent monograph by Diego Ruiz Palmer, "French Strategic Options in the 1990s," *Adelphi Papers* No. 260, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1991, pp. 52-58.
49. Francois Heisbourg, "The British and French Nuclear Forces," *Survival*, Volume 31, No. 2, July-August 1989, pp. 308-310.
50. See, *The Times* (London), September 16, 1991.
51. According to one press report, Washington and London have already begun to explore this option. See, *The Washington Times*, September 9, 1991. Franco-British joint planning for the ASLP dates back at least as far as 1987. See, *The Washington Post*, December 22, 1987.
52. See, *The Washington Post*, May 29, and June 2, 1989.
53. See Jeffrey Herf, *War by Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles*, New York: The Free Press, 1991.

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